

Saturday, April 29, 2017

Wade Williams, Journal Entry 7, *Morality as a Social Contract*

For my reaction to the reading of Hobbes and Rawls, I decided to use the Study Questions at the end of the chapter because they make me think about the reading. I do not believe that life without government would be “brutish and short” as Hobbes says. I believe that men may form agreements among each other to assure mutual respect for property and each other. One example of a society that operated without a government was the Native Americans. The Native Americans created tribes, and lived in tribes that functioned independent of each other, unless they did battle. However, for the majority of the time the Native Americans were able to live long healthy lives and coexist for many years. Hobbes explains the “right of nature”, which he defines is the liberty each man hath, to use his own power to preserve his own life. Hobbes also mentions the “law of nature”, which basically means that man is forbidden to do an act that is destructive of his life.

Rawls discusses the “original position”, which simply is that man exists and does not know anything about his current situation, such as his wealth, knowledge, strength, etc. It is simply the state of nature, without any influence from society. The “veil of ignorance” is the veil that man imagines himself in, to block any influence of factors that may affect judgement. I appreciate Rawls’ two principles of justice, and I also believe that we need more equality in society. People with tons of wealth are morally required to spread some of the wealth to people that are unfortunate. A great pile of wealth enjoyed by one person is unequal to wealth spread across hundreds of families in a poor country. I believe in maximizing happiness, and money that is spread between many people instead of belonging to a few fortunate people is morally unjust, and as Rawls states the distribution of wealth should be to everyone’s advantage.